(a) whether it is a fact that Government has a proposal to give core sector status to SEZ developers to enable them to get easier access to fund at cheaper rates;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for such decision; and

(d) the details of financial implications, arising out of this decision for the Government and for SEZ developers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (d) As per available information, Reserve Bank of India has treated the exposure of commercial banks to entities for setting up Special Economic Zones (SEZs) as exposure to commercial real estate sector and accordingly banks would have to make provision as well as assign appropriate risk weights for such exposure.

**Production and consumption of Indian tea**

†476. SHRI SAMAN PATHAK: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of the registered tea plantations in the country, State-wise, and the quantity of tea produced during each of the last three years from these tea plantations;

(b) the consumption of Indian tea in the country and abroad;

(c) whether the export of Darjeeling tea has increased in other countries after being patented; and

(d) the quantity of Darjeeling tea exported to other countries during the last three years and the revenue profit earned by Government from it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) The number of the registered tea plantations in the country, State-wise, and the quantity of tea produced during each of the last three years from these tea plantations are as under:-

| State | No. of registered tea plantations | Production (Million Kgs) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 |
| Assam | 51605 | 487.49 | 502.04 | 479.92 |
| West Bengal | 9018 | 217.55 | 237.11 | 231.44 |
| Others @ | 8630 | 13.38 | 14. 09 | 13.33 |
| Total North India | 69253 | 718.42 | 753.24 | 724.69 |
| Tamil Nadu | 68374 | 163.68 | 163.66 | 153.13 |
| Kerala | 5557 | 58.50 | 59.46 | 61.83 |
| Karnataka | 33 | 5.37 | 5.44 | 5.03 |
| Total South India | 73964 | 227.55 | 228.56 | 219.99 |
| All Total | 143217 | 945.97 | 981.81 | 944.68 |

@ Includes smaller States such as Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Sikkim, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Uttaranchal, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(b) The consumption of Indian tea in the country and abroad is given below –

*Consumption of tea in India and World*

(Figures in Million Kgs.)

| Year | Consumption of Indian tea in India | Consumption of Indian tea abroad (exports) |
|---|---|---|
| 2005 | 757 | 199.05 |
| 2006 | 771 | 218.73 |
| 2007 | 786 | 178.75 |

(c) and (d) In terms of quantity, exports of Darjeeling tea from India have always been around 65 to 70% of the total production. The objectives behind "patenting" Darjeeling tea and giving it Geographical Indication status ensures that only genuine Darjeeling Tea is exported from the 87 gardens. Separate information on total quantity of exports of Darjeeling Tea is not available, as during the process teas are blended and exported in packaged form. In terms of specific consignments leaving the shores under Certificates of Origin, the year wise figures are follows:

| Year | Quantity (Kgs) |
|---|---|
| 2005 | 4,144,382 |
| 2006 | 4,340,415 |
| 2007 | 4,445,349 |

**Effect of rupee appreciation on export**

477. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that nearly 70 per cent of India's export trade is invoiced in dollar forcing many to believe that the export target of $160 billion for this year, was unlikely to be achieved;

(b) whether a large number of exporters has sought Government's financial assistance to enable them to invoice their export in Indian Rupees only instead of US Dollar; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to mitigate the effect of Rupee appreciation across the export sectors, make them internationally competitive and also enable them to achieve export targets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) It is a fact that majority of Indian exports are invoiced in US$. There is no restriction on invoicing of export contracts in Indian Rupees in terms of the Rules, Regulations, Notifications and Directions framed under the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999. Further, in terms of Para 2.40 of the Foreign Trade Policy (September 1, 2004 to March 31, 2009), "all export contracts and invoices shall be denominated either in freely convertible currency or in Indian Rupees but export proceeds shall be realized in freely convertible currency. Government has taken a number of steps to mitigate the effect of Rupee Appreciation on